1: Drew G-3 (1862-1872) 1875 AV1 Kashmir AV1

In the march from Syālsūī onwards we crossed the boundary of Hindūs and Muhammadans, leaving the former and entering the country occupied by the latter. The Hindūs about Dharmsāla and Syālsūī were in great part Thakars; that caste has evidently been of chief importance here, and has not been so much overshadowed by Mīāns as it has farther east. The Thakars' houses, usually high up on the tops of the hills, are solidly built of stone, and have something of the character of forts; they even bear the name "kot," an old word for fort.

At last we get clear of these hills, and come into the valley of the Western or Mināwar Tavī, which is at this time a stream of moderate volume flowing over ridges of rock, often making deep pools between them which are very favourable to the fisherman.

A strange way of slaughtering the fish is sometimes practised here by the natives. An earthen vessel is filled with the milky juice of the plant (*Euphorbia*), which bears the name of *tor*, and, attached to a long pole, is moved about in the pool; the juice getting mixed with the water blinds the fish, and while they swim here and there, not knowing which way to go, they can easily be speared.

Continuing up the valley by the left bank of the river, between low spurs of the hills, in a few miles we come opposite to the town of Rājāorī. This place has been spoken of in Chapter v. The old royal garden there described, opposite the town, has become the halting-place for travellers, chiefly for the English. We have here come into the Bhimbar route to Sirīnagar frequented by them, and from this place onwards our own road coincides with it.

The town of Rājāorī shows a front to the river of large stone buildings, some of them ruinous. There is a mosque of the time of the Emperors, now used for a wood store: the rest-houses of the same period have been mentioned before. Then, besides these regal works, are buildings of different sorts raised by the former Muhammadan Rajas of Rājāorī.* It must be remembered that

* Probably these regions are the only part of India where Muhammadan rulers have borne the title of Raja.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India Kashmir AY1

241 snow on the mountains is the cultivator's anxiously observed guide to the chances of the ensuing season. The agricultural calendar is roughly as follows:

[221]

March .	. ploughing, manuring with dung of winter
April .	. fertilising with turves from stream-banks; paddy, linseed, and sesamum sown (kharif)
May–June .	. rape harvest; *grim* sown (above 7000 ft)
June–July .	. paddy weeding; barley and wheat harvest (rabi)
July–Aug. .	. linseed harvest
Aug.–Sept.	. ploughing for rabi wheat and barley; *grim* harvest
Sept. .	. ploughing for rape; rape sown
Sept.–Oct.	. paddy and sesamum harvest; wheat sown
Oct.–Dec. .	. barley and later wheat sown.

January and February are dead months. The shortness of the *grim* growing season will be noted.

[226] The lakes have a peculiar economy of their own. "They bear innumerable boats, from which fish are caught in skilfully manipulated throw-nets. Weeds are dredged up to provide fodder for the cattle, and water chestnuts and lotus roots for human food. And, as if such fertility were inadequate, sods of marshy earth are bound together into rafts heavy with manure, and these are moored in rows across the swamp to form floating gardens, so that the boundary between earth, air, and water is made fruitful and bears the fiery red fruits of tomato plants." [15]

More important, if less picturesque, is the formation of new land on the shallow lake-margins by planting willows in the water and filling up the compartments so formed with boatloads of lake-mud and weeds. These *demb* lands are used not only for fruit and vegetables, but even for rape, maize, and tobacco.

The orchards of Kashmir provide the most valuable of its exports after timber; most temperate and sub-tropical fruits and nuts are grown. The most important fruit is probably the apricot, and the walnut is a source of [274] lighting and cooking oil as well as a food. One of the main attractions of Kashmir to hard-drinking Moguls like Babur and Jahangir was its wine, but the vine has no longer its ancient fame, despite the establishment of a state vineyard with Bordeaux stocks—one development which is not likely [263] to appeal to the future rulers of Kashmir, be they *Indian* or Pakistani. Even hops have been introduced, doubtless to be withdrawn again now. Finally we may note the cultivation on one or two *karewas* of the saffron crocus, in demand as a condiment and as a pigment for Indian sect-marks. Minor crops include opium poppy and the recently introduced pyrethrum.[16]

[15] G. E. Hutchinson, *The Clear Mirror* (1936), 102.

[16] Most of the details in this section are drawn from the full and fascinating account in the *Gazetteer* (41–63).